

# Pest Update (May 18, 2011)

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Note: samples containing living tissue may only be accepted from South Dakota. Please do not send samples of dying plants or insects from other states. If you live outside of South Dakota and have a question, instead please send a digital picture of the pest or problem. **Walnut samples may not be sent in from any location – please provide a picture!**

## Available on the net at:

<http://sdda.sd.gov/Forestry/Educational-Information/PestAlert-Archives.aspx>

Any treatment recommendations, including those identifying specific pesticides, are for the convenience of the reader. Pesticides mentioned in this publication are generally those that are most commonly available to the public in South Dakota and the inclusion of a product shall not be taken as an endorsement or the exclusion a criticism regarding effectiveness. Please read and follow all label instructions and the label is the final authority for a product's use on a particular pest or plant. Products requiring a commercial pesticide license are occasionally mentioned if there are limited options available. These products will be identified as such but it is the reader's responsibility to determine if they can legally apply any product identified in this publication.

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## Plant development

We are still a couple of weeks behind in normal plant development. Usually the crabapples have finished blooming by now and this year they have just reached full bloom in Brookings. Lilacs are just beginning to bloom in town, again a little behind schedule. More cold and wet weather is on the way so I expect we will continue to see a slow development of plants this spring.

## Tasks to complete now



**Clearwing ash borer** treatment with an insecticide containing permethrin as an active ingredient can begin in a couple of weeks. The adults are usually out flying about a week or so after Vanhouttee spireas begin to bloom, probably at least a week or two away. You know when the adults are flying out from an infested tree by the papery pupal skins and sawdust left in or around the emergent hole.

**Diplodia tip blight** treatments should be started now. This is probably the most common disease of pines, particularly Austrian pine. Symptoms in early summer are the new needles becoming brown and stunted. Twigs may be infected and become stunted and deformed. The treatment is a fungicide containing thiophanate-methyl, propiconazole or chlorothalonil just before the buds sheaths have opened, timing is critical, and repeat the treatment in 10 to 14 days. The bud sheaths are just beginning to open now throughout the state so try to get the first application on in the next week.



**Spruce spider mites** become active now as silver maple leaves are expanding – now across much of the state. Spruce spider mites are cool season mites meaning they are active in the spring and fall, not during the summer heat. The mites will go dormant once the temperatures consistently reach into the mid 80's. While the mites will begin feeding soon, the damage to the needles, bronzing and browning, does not typically show up until

summer just as the mite populations begin to decline. Treatment options are very limited for homeowners, horticultural oils and insecticidal soaps being the two most common. These are really suppression treatments, not eradication, and the webbing often prevents these pesticides, particularly the soap, from penetrating. They should be applied now and then another treatment next week, about 7 to 10 days after the first treatment to kill the mites as they hatch from eggs. Be aware of the cautions to the use of these products, particularly for blue spruce, as applications of oils or soaps can result in the loss of blue or silvery color to the foliage. You can make a *blue* spruce, a *green* spruce, very quickly, so read and follow label directions very carefully. The other common spray that homeowners can buy has the active ingredient acephate but this kills more insects than just mites and sometimes has limited effectiveness. Insecticides containing this active ingredient are also becoming difficult to find in our state, Ortho Systemic Insect Killer is the most common pesticide available that contains acephate and only a few distributors in the state have this product on their shelves. Acephate should also be applied in two treatments spaced 10 days apart. Homeowners with large spruce trees, or trees that are heavily infested should consider hiring a professional service. They have the equipment and chemical products that can truly provide some control of mites.

### Tasks to do in couple of weeks...



**Codling moth** – the larvae of this insect burrow into the apple, usually near the base of the fruit, resulting in a trail through the apple filled with brown, powdery frass. This frass often extrudes from the entry hole. Treatment is usually an application of malathion sprayed about 10 days after petal fall and then 3 more applications spaced about 10 days apart. Do not spray insecticides on apple trees while they are in bloom!

You will kill the pollinators. If you are using a general fruit multi-purpose spray, it probably has an insecticide in it so these sprays should also not be applied during bloom.

### E-samples

#### **This was the week for environmental issues and trees.**

The first picture shows the split trunk on an Autumn Blaze ash (not maple). This is a cultivar of white ash that was popular due to the brilliant fall color. Unfortunately, it is also a tree prone to winter injury in our state. Sunscald and bark cracks are very common on young, marginally hardy, smooth barked trees such as some maples and ash. The cambial tissue is killed usually along the south or southwest side of the trunk and in the spring this results in long vertical splits. The tree usually survives the splitting but these



defects often do not close and become a potential infection site. There is little that can be done once the split occurs. Applying wound dressing or paint will not promote closure nor inhibit decay. However, to prevent the split from occurring in the first place on a young tree wrap the lower trunk to about 4 feet or to the height of the lowest limb with white plastic wrap (not the brown Kraft paper) or place a slit drain tile around the trunk during the winter. This will protect the tree trunk from rapid temperature fluctuations that occur and is only necessary to do with young trees. Once the bark thickens these types of cracks become far less common.



**Hackberries are also creating some alarm from the premature leaf fall.** This is almost an annual event, though not always the same trees every year. It seems that the cool, wet weather has resulted in the loss of many, and sometimes most, of the young leaves on hackberry. This is not a concern. The trees may appear a little sparse right now but they will be producing new leaves very soon.



**What is this shrub?** I have received a lot of identification calls and emails in the past week. This is one of the most common plants for which identification is requested. This is the cranberrybush viburnum, a common ornamental shrub. The shrub has attractive white flowers in the spring, followed by a nice red fall color to the leaves and red berry-like drupe fruit that hang on the branches for much of the winter. The fruit is very

sour (and not the true cranberry) so the birds usually do not eat it until spring.

## **Samples received**

Clay County FL1100017  
**2 feet tall.**

**What is this tree? It's a sapling about**

This is green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), a very common tree species. The seeds can blow in from just about anywhere.

Minnehaha County FL1100018

**What is wrong with Jerry's blue spruce? The trees have lost many of their needles along the lower third of the canopy. The needles that are left are purple.**

This is cytospora canker, probably the most common disease of blue spruce. It is hard to find a tree that is more than 20 years old that doesn't have the disease. The most common symptom is the discoloration and loss of the lower needles. If you look closely you'll notice bluish-white resin blisters – almost look like bird droppings – on the branches. This is the canker. Unfortunately



there is no control for this disease, it comes with old age (20 years plus for a spruce) or growing on a poor site. The only control measure is to prune out infected branches as they decline but this merely slows the disease, not eliminates it.



Minnehaha County FL1100022  
**What is this insect found on a sliver maple?**

This is a braconidae, a parasitoid wasp, which attacks other insects. These can be found darting around declining trees, often old maple trees, seeking a suitable host. The long ovipositor is often confused as a “stinger” but they cannot sting you with it. Instead they insert this through the bark of the

tree and into a larva of a wood-boring insect. I suspect the tree has some internal decay.

Mystery County  
**problem.**

**Please identify Kopeck’s tree and the**

This is eastern redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) and they often have a yellowish cast to them in the spring. It will green up as the weather becomes warm. The small bumps at the tips of the foliage are the formation of the “flowers” The sample also included a branch from a blue spruce. I could not tell much from the branch except all of last year’s foliage was abnormally short. Something happened to the tree last year but could not tell what from the sample. Is the tree in a low area?